

SPECIAL NUMBER.

I.

LEND A HAND.

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

THIRD NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE OF
CHARITIES, CORRECTION AND PHILANTHROPY,
HELD IN NEWPORT, R. I.,

October 10, 11, 12 and 13, 1894.

Introductory Note. The New England Conference of Charities has passed the experimental stage of its existence, and now needs no introduction to the readers of **LEND A HAND**. The Newport Session was well attended and interesting, as the following proceedings will witness.

One hundred and fifty-three delegates registered. One of these came from New York. Of the remainder three were from Maine, seventy-seven from Massachusetts, thirteen from Connecticut, and fifty-nine from Rhode Island.

I.

OPENING SESSION.

The Conference was called to order by the President, Col. John Hare Powel of Newport, on Wednesday evening, October 10th, at 8 p. m., in Masonic Hall, where all the sessions of the Conference were held. The opening session included formal addresses of welcome by the President and by the Mayor of Newport, Hon. Daniel B. Fearing, and an address by Mr. John Graham Brooks of Cambridge, Mass., who spoke on "A Fatality of the Social Problem."

In Mr. Brooks's interesting address he dwelt particularly upon the underlying causes of the present social unrest, and proposed practical remedies. It is greatly to be regretted that the address cannot be published with the proceedings of the Conference.

II.

REPORTS

CHARITY ORGANIZATION IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY JAMES M. PULLMAN, D. D., CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATED CHARITIES OF LYNN.

Known to this committee there are twenty-seven societies in New England which have as their object, either wholly or in part, the organization and coördination of the charities of their respective communities. They are in substantial agreement with the principles and methods which have been developed by the modern effort to make charity more efficacious; namely, coöperation, investigation, registration, and friendly visiting.

Of these societies, Maine has four—located at Auburn, Bangor, Portland, and Gardner; Massachusetts has sixteen—

at Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Fall River, Fitchburg, Lawrence, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Newton, Salem, Springfield, Taunton, Watertown, Westfield, and Worcester; Connecticut has four—at Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, and New Haven; Rhode Island has three—at Newport, Pawtucket, and Providence.

The newness of the charity organizing movement is well expressed by the fact that of these twenty-seven societies, eight are under four years of age, fourteen under ten, twenty under fifteen, and the oldest, (under its present form) is under eighteen.

Fifteen of these societies are incorporated under the laws of their respective states, and of these, eight have begun the creation of permanent funds aggregating \$26,635.

Twenty-three societies report an aggregate income for last year of \$61,664, chiefly derived from subscriptions, but added to by members' fees, church collections, proceeds of entertainments, and in one case by an appropriation.

Twenty-one societies employ an aggregate of fifty-nine paid secretaries, registrars, agents, and clerks; and twenty-two societies have seventeen hundred and two unpaid visitors, one hundred and sixty-six of whom are men, and fifteen hundred and thirty-six are women.

Fourteen societies report having made 6,768 investigations on request during the past year; and seventeen societies give as the total of their investigations to date, 91,199 cases.

RELIEF GIVING.

To the question,—“Do you give relief, other than emergency, from your own funds?” three societies return no answer; five say “Yes” and nineteen say “No.” Of those who say “Yes,” one society adds, “but we are trying to work out of it.” Of those who say “No,” one society adds, “Special funds are sometimes placed in our hands for individual cases,” and another says, “During the past winter funds were forced on us by persons who believed that we could best disburse them.”

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS.

Nine societies say they have no branch or auxiliary organizations; seven make no answer; three maintain Day Nurseries; one has fourteen district conferences; one has four ward conferences; while the others maintain or assist employment bureaus, dispensaries, penny savings societies, district nursing, a fresh air fund, a wood-yard, a fuel savings society, a free kindergarten, home libraries, cooking schools, and a stamp savings society.

CO-OPERATION.

Twenty societies report coöperation, more or less complete, with Overseers of the Poor, police department, State Board of Charities, town selectmen. Two societies do not report on coöperation, and two say they have none; while twenty-three societies report the coöperation, to some extent, of local charitable societies, hospitals, asylums, churches, G. A. R. Relief Corps, and King's Daughters.

One society says:—"About twenty-two (22) of the seventy (70) churches really coöperate with us. Only two or three of the churches have definitely declined coöperation." Another says: "Definitely and systematically not one (of the charitable societies and churches) coöperate, although they use us occasionally, and many of the churches contribute to our support." Another says: "All coöperate to some degree. It is difficult to give exact figures, but our experience is very satisfactory; there is no antagonism." Another says: "Six societies and three churches report the names of their beneficiaries to us." Seven societies report the use of their registries by charitable individuals to be limited or small; fourteen say that the use is increasing or large.

PROMOTION AND INSTALLATION OF CHARITABLE AGENCIES.

The societies were asked: "What relief, provident or educational schemes, have you established, or assisted to es-

tablish or maintain?" Among the answers are: "Loan club, free kindergarten, working girls' club, training school for nurses, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, free dispensary, laundry, sewing class, instruction class for friendly visitors."

SANITARY WORK.

Seven societies report that they have given some attention to this work, by instigating sanitary inspection, laying complaints before the Board of Health, and by teaching cleanliness and the observance of sanitary conditions through their friendly visitors.

EMERGENCY WORK.

During the past year one society sent supplies to Miss Clara Barton, of the Red Cross Society, to help relieve the sufferers by the Sea Islands calamity; and the Boston society gave very efficient assistance in dealing with the distress caused by the Roxbury fire.

The record of the work done by societies in last winter's labor emergency is so good that I regret the necessity of dismissing some of the reports with a bare mention. Seventeen societies, located in the communities which were specially affected by the stringent conditions, entered vigorously upon the work of mitigation and relief. Two societies specially organized for work-relief, three opened wood-yards, three set up employment bureaus and used special influence to provide employment for men and women; others coöperated with local relief-agencies in providing food, fuel, and clothing. Some detailed statements of methods employed will be filed with this report.

PROPAGANDA.

Asked what means they employ to disseminate the principles developed under charity organization, three societies respond that they depend on their work alone, eight use in

addition the pulpit and press whenever practicable, and ten hold, annually or oftener, public meetings at which charity organization principles and methods are set forth, illustrated, and discussed. One society issued last winter a card entitled, "How to Use Us," adapted from one published by the Baltimore society. This society says: "Occasionally we send something to the newspapers, but the best method of making ourselves known is through friendly visitors who, privately and quietly, talk with their friends about their work and our work, and this has distinctly helped to make the society less unpopular than in some other cities of our size."

IMPROVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ADMINISTRATION
OF CHARITY.

Asked to note the signs of improvement, one society reports that public relief in its city has been cut down one half; two say they can see no improvement; seven perceive a more wise and thoughtful distribution of charity; others note a diminution of street and house-to-house begging and an increase of confidence in the better methods as shown by larger contributions to charity. One society says: "In the administration of public and private charity, there is more thorough investigation, and a tendency toward undertaking all the relief for any family that is helped at all. In private charity there is less actual giving of relief because other ways of adequate and judicious help are learned and practised."

Improvement in the condition of the dependent or alms-seeking poor is noted by thirteen societies, in the decrease of street begging, better sanitary conditions, increase of self-respect, and the disposition to work, and the restoration of dependent families to self-support. "Distinctly noticeable since we began our work," says one society, "is the diminution of the pauper spirit. Not only is there less begging in the ordinary sense, but less of the spirit of dependence."

GROWTH OF PUBLIC OPINION IN FAVOR OF ORGANIZED CHARITY.

One society sees none, three see very little, nineteen see a distinct growth shading upward from tolerance and qualified approval to general concurrence and endorsement. One says: "There is abundant growth of public opinion in favor of our methods; it may not take the form of approval of our society, but the spread of our principles is even more gratifying than that." Another says: "What was said in our annual report about our growth in favor can be much emphasized at this date."

ATTRACTIVE PHASES OF WORK.

In answer to the question, "What phase of your work has been most satisfactory?" seven societies decline to commit themselves, one finds most satisfaction in the sewing school, two in investigation and registration, one in the coöperation of the public, one in teaching the poor to work, five in friendly visiting, one in Fresh Air fund work, one in Day Nursery, two in encouraging the poor to self-reliance, three in providing employment for the poor, one in clothing children; one happy society finds equal joy in every phase of the work, and one boldly announces its satisfaction in the detection and exposure of charity impostors.

Among the comments on the least satisfactory phases of the work is one which will strike a responsive chord in every experienced charity worker's breast: "Helping parents who will not help themselves, but who have little children that must be cared for." Another finds unsatisfactory, "the council meetings where the broad aspects of our work ought to be discussed, but which are poorly attended and dull. The men of the community, while glad to support the Associated Charities Society with money, do not give the time and thought it should have to be thoroughly successful." Another touches a serious and widely felt difficulty in saying: "We have had complications about the 'right arm of

charity organization,' (friendly visiting), and I frankly admit that our work in these lines, though with some cheering exceptions, has not been as satisfactory as we hoped. It is hard to find the right kind of visitors, and to get them to work in the right way. We need education here, and that it has not been hitherto possible to secure. . . . We hope to do better this year."

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS IN METHOD.

The suggestions under this head are very few, but pertinent. One wants closer investigation; another would have a more effective method of reaching the *silent* poor; two others would place more emphasis on friendly visiting; and another wishes to see "more devotion to the social, scientific side of the work; a systematic study of the subjects that come up; an intelligent interest in vital questions of the time,—especially as they relate to charity and relief,—a wider outlook."

PRISONS OF NEW ENGLAND.

BY J. G. THORP, JR., PRES. OF MASS. PRISON ASSOCIATION.

MAINE.

Maine has a State Prison at Thomaston, and a jail in every county but two,—fourteen in all. The population of the State Prison ranged from about 125 to 175 convicts during the year; of the jails, from about 350 to 450. The whole number of prisoners annually committed to the jails is about 4000. The supervising body of the State Prison and jails is a board of three inspectors. They periodically visit and investigate all the penal institutions of the state, and make an annual report concerning the State Prison to the Legislature. This board also has the valuable power to transfer prisoners from one jail to another for purposes of classification; and

they may order such changes in the construction of jails as they deem necessary to the safety and proper classification of the convicts. A member of the executive council also frequently visits the State Prison. Strict discipline in the State Prison is well enforced by an efficient warden, and the convicts are kept as fully and constantly employed on the public-account system as the condition of the prison and the limitations of a very bad convict-labor law will permit. This law permits the employment of no more than 20 per cent. of the convicts in any one industry. It therefore prevents the organization of any industry on a large scale, and compels a diversification of labor that is difficult to bring about with good financial results. The law was a sop thrown to the labor agitators. That any outside industry would be affected by the competition which this small number of men in the prisons could create is, of course, "arrant nonsense," as the inspectors of prisons have well said in their report. They have sought the repeal of the law, but have not secured it.

The Maine State Prison has the undesirable distinction, among all the other prisons in the country which contain women convicts, of having no matron. The female prisoners are under the care of male guards. The inspectors recognize the impropriety of this, and asked the Legislature in their report of 1892 to provide a matron, but so far this reasonable request has not been granted.

They also vainly asked at that time for the appointment of a chaplain as a regular prison officer. Fortunately they have had, since 1892, the services of a devoted man, who, if I read the report rightly, gives his time gratuitously and with excellent effect to the work of chaplain and teacher.

At all but four of the smaller jails "religious instruction," presumably from voluntary sources, is given to the prisoners; otherwise no attempt to instruct or reform the jail prisoners is made.

In jails in which about one-half of the jail prisoners of the state are confined, an attempt is made to classify prisoners

according to crime and age. This is done, as the various masters report, "as well as we can," or "as well as the jail will permit." In the other jails no such attempt is made. Some of the jails are modern and reasonably adequate to their purpose, according to prevailing standards. Others are poor and inadequate. Two of the larger jails, those in Kennebec and Washington counties, which receive the highest commendation from the inspectors in their report, keep their prisoners in close confinement without labor, certainly not a humane state of things. In other jails convicts are apparently permitted to congregate, and in most an inadequate provision of cell-room permits and compels the pernicious practice of doubling up in the use of cells.

There seems to be an opportunity for objectionable methods, both toward the state and the prisoner, in the questionable practice which prevails in the counties of paying the sheriff directly for the board of the prisoner. The rate charged for board, however, ranging as it does from \$1.75 to \$2.50 a week, does not suggest excessive profit to the sheriff nor luxurious fare to the prisoner.

The stress of the administration in Maine is evidently laid on maintaining good discipline and on securing good financial results. Reformation of the prisoners, except as the result of discipline and hard work, is little considered. The directors say in their report of 1892: "The discipline of the prison in recent years has been such as to make the reformatory influences as potent as possible, and to so habituate convicts to a life of industry and regularity, that they may yet be of some service to themselves and mankind in general. We do not believe in the ultra-reformatory ideas of those people who are manifestly incompetent to discuss such matters, by reason of lack of contact and practical association with prison management; nor that morbid philanthropy which subscribes for the life-long hardened murderer, 'a love-your-neighbor-as-yourself' doctrine, that would treat the convict with baseball, flowers, ice-cream, music, and light literature as a means of reformation. Rigid, exacting, and

impartial discipline, good, plain food, and regular hours of labor at some profitable industry that gives the convict a good trade, is the reformatory method which experience teaches will produce the best results in institutions of this kind."

That the directors have hit upon desirable factors of reformatory methods is quite true. That experience teaches that these are all, or even the greater part, of the best methods, or those which produce the largest reformatory results, is far from true.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Very little in detail can be given concerning New Hampshire prisons, as available published statistics are very meagre. The State Prison is at Concord. It is a model institution, and well arranged for its uses. The warden, Mr. George W. Colbath, has the reputation of being a steady and firm disciplinarian. He maintains good order in his prison. December 1st, 1893, there were 173 prisoners confined for sentences ranging from one to thirty years. The industries, conducted on the contract system, are well ordered, and the earnings of the prison very nearly meet its expenditures.

The prison is apparently under the supervision of prison inspectors, as the title of the last report is "Reports of the Wardens and Inspectors of State Prisons," but as the names of the inspectors do not appear in the report, and as they are not mentioned or referred to in any way other than by this title page reference, it is difficult to say just what their function is other than that suggested by the title of "inspectors."

There is no apparent effort to grade or classify prisoners, and no special attempt to apply reformatory methods other than those involved in regular work and the maintenance of good discipline. Important factors certainly, as we have seen, in any reformatory scheme, but applied in this case, I

suspect, as in Maine, more with an eye to the financial interests of the state than to the reformation of the prisoners.

The State Prison holds nearly one-half the prisoners of the state; the other half, about 200 in all, being confined in small groups in several county jails and prisons. A few prisoners are held in workhouses on short sentences for petty offences. For this small, scattered and floating prison population little is done except to house and feed them. It would be difficult, under existing conditions, to organize industries for them, or to bring any sort of reformatory influence to bear.

VERMONT.

The State Prison is at Windsor. It is under the supervision of a board of three directors, appointed by the governor. Sentences to this prison have an unusually wide range, from six months to life; but most of the prisoners are confined for periods ranging from two years to life. Both sexes are sent to this prison, but the number of women is small. The entire State Prison population is generally less than 100. The inmates are employed on the public account system. The discipline of the prison is apparently good, and the prisoners are kept well employed.

The State House of Correction is at Rutland. It receives about 800 convicts in the year, and has an average daily population of about 100. Of the 808 commitments in the year ending June 30, 1894, 346 were for drunkenness and 167 for keeping and selling liquor. There were 145 tramps committed during the year. More than one-fourth of these prisoners had sentences not exceeding one month, and more than one-half of the entire number served less than four months. With such a floating population little can be done except to maintain discipline and care for the bodily comfort of the prisoners; but the attempt to do even this is rendered difficult by over-crowding. The superintendent says in his last report: "The men's prison contains seventy-one ordi-

nary one-man cells and five dungeon cells. The women's department has six cells. The fact that there were 130 to 150 prisoners here last year, and at the present time 127, male and female, needs no additional arguments to show the necessity for more cell room." The directors, commenting upon this in their report to the Legislature, say: "Think of putting two prisoners into a small cell intended for one, with no ventilation to speak of, and call it humane. There should be an easy remedy, and we commend this to your wise consideration." But during the past ten years, though the number of annual commitments has increased from 328 to 808, the state has done little to increase the accommodations or the facilities for caring for those imprisoned. This prison has its chaplain and teacher; but of the school the latter reports: "It has been necessary to give up the work of the school through the winters of '93 and '94 on account of the crowded condition of the institution through these winters, as the school room had to be used as a sleeping room for the prisoners." At this time the school was evidently occupied by the 145 tramps, who were getting their annual winter support at the expense of the state. The directors say on this point: "What are we to do with the tramp problem? They come in droves, from five to nine, sentenced for short and long terms, and seriously trouble the officers to provide for them in an already over-crowded institution." It is amazing that our states can go on giving these travelled gentlemen short-term sentences under easy conditions year after year, and so encourage and perpetuate the race. New Hampshire alone among our New England states, by giving those who are caught long-term sentences and hard work, keeps most of them out of her borders. It is a daring tramp, or a novice, who comes into New Hampshire.

More than one-half of the inmates in this prison are under thirty years of age and open to reformatory influences, if the state would supply them. The industry is marble working upon the public-account system. It has proved fully as

profitable under this system as under the old contract system, which it displaced.

The Rutland county jail is connected with the house of correction. It has very few inmates. Vermont has a law which authorizes the governor to discharge convicts from the State Prison and House of Correction upon such conditions as he judges proper. If these conditions are violated, the prisoner may be returned and must serve out his entire sentence. Apparently little use is made of this power by the governor.

MASSACHUSETTS.

The Massachusetts State Prison is at Charlestown. Its location in the centre of a city has the advantage of nearness to police and fire protection, but it has the disadvantages, certainly, of bringing the prisoners too near the exciting and distracting sounds of city life, and of giving them greater opportunities to escape.

The buildings are at present inadequate for the proper classification and management of prisoners, although this difficulty will be met in the main by the construction of a new cell block for the separate confinement of unruly prisoners, which was authorized by the last Legislature.

The discipline of the prison has until recently been most unsatisfactory, caused in part by the large number of prisoners (no state prison in New England has half as many: the daily average in 1893 was 669), many of whom were desperate characters, and by the lack of cell room for the separate confinement of the unruly class. Since the appointment of the present warden the discipline has greatly improved. With the new cell block for the unruly, to be built on the plan of the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, (each cell large and airy, permitting separate confinement at hard labor for an indefinite period), and with the classification of prisoners which these new cells will make possible and which the law now permits, there seems to be every proba-

bility that even better discipline will prevail and a satisfactory result from the industries of the prison be secured.

The industries now conducted on both the public-account and piece-price plans, are the manufacture of brushes, harnesses, shoes, trunks, wire beds, and tinware.

No convict can be sent to the State Prison for less than three years. The sentences of those now imprisoned range from three years to life. No woman can be sent to the state prison.

The other state penal institutions are the Massachusetts Reformatory at Concord and the Reformatory Prison at Sherborn, both institutions of which Massachusetts has good reason to be proud. To the reformatory are sent only male prisoners of thirty-five years and under. They are committed on indeterminate sentences, and can be held, if convicted of a felony, for five years; if for any less offence, two years. Or they can by good conduct earn an earlier release, conditioned on future good behavior, if careful investigation of their past record, their conduct in prison, and their future prospects give promise of power and determination to avoid crime thereafter. A violation of the conditions of their release may result in re-arrest and confinement for the remainder of the maximum term.

In 1893 the average daily number of prisoners was 954. The total number of commitments during the year was 1747.

The industries of the prison, conducted on the piece-price plan, are well organized, and the discipline is admirable. The prisoners are carefully graded according to conduct, and every influence, physical, intellectual, moral, and religious, which are considered of helpful and reformatory value in the outside world, are, as far as a liberal and intelligent policy of management will permit, brought to bear on the prisoners there. The reformatory was fortunate in having as its superintendent during its early years the devoted and intelligent friend of the prisoner, Mr. Gardiner M. Tufts. On his death, two years ago, he was succeeded by Mr. Joseph L.

Scott, the present superintendent, of whose ability and devotion too much cannot be said.

All women prisoners in Massachusetts not sent to the county or city prisons are sent to the Reformatory Prison for women. No penal institution could be more admirable than this in its purpose and present management. The system of the prison is best described in the words of its matron in her last report :

“ Its prominent features are the grading of prisoners according to conduct, with the stimulus and privilege of promotion and the plan by which, under the Indenture law, many of the higher grades are allowed to go out for domestic service before the expiration of sentence. Justice to the prisoner requires that she should not be sent out empty-handed, that she should be possessed not only of the ability to make an honest living, but of some provision for immediate needs. Under the Indenture law, a woman may take a place at service in a family living in the country and keeping no other servant, the object being to bring her under the influence of family life, and to keep her from old temptations. At the same time, she is trained to domestic duties, and her earnings are entirely under her own control. In no way is the wisdom of this law more clearly shown than by the fact that the demand for prison help is always beyond the supply. Unfilled applications are constantly on file. It is a gratifying thought that to every woman who comes out of these walls the doors of some home stand open. That the prison training goes far to bring this about is indicated by unsought testimony to the efficiency and trustworthiness of these women. In a word, the practical working of our system proves its fitness. It has long since passed the stage of experiment. It has developed the characteristics of a public charity of the broadest kind.”

The average daily number of prisoners held in 1893 was 306 : 600 in all were in custody during the year. Sentences range from one to five years, or during minority. The industries, in addition to the house work of the prison, are

needle work, shirt making, and laundry work. They are conducted with great ability and with excellent financial results. The discipline is remarkable.

While the gratifying moral tone of this prison and its extraordinary reformatory results are undoubtedly owing in great part to the admirable system prevailing, which has been largely created by the present matron, Mrs. Ellen C. Johnson, yet a very large share must be attributed to her very unusual personal qualifications for the work. The executive ability and force, deep moral purpose and power to direct and guide her "girls," as she pleasantly calls the women, though some of them have passed three score and ten,—these qualities which are united in her are very rarely found in combination.

These three state institutions, the state prison and the two reformatories, are under the direct supervision of an unpaid board of five prison commissioners, appointed by the governor, two of whom are women. The commissioners have not only power to visit, advise and report concerning these institutions, but they also make rules of conduct and administration, examine books, accounts, approve contracts for labor and supplies, transfer prisoners from one institution to another, and have other duties of a similar nature that need not be enumerated here. They also have the heavy and important task of supervising and directing the conditional release of prisoners from the two reformatories. Their relation to the county prisons of the state is also important. They have power to transfer prisoners from one to the other, and to the reformatories, to visit, examine and report concerning these prisons, and to make rules for the direction of the officers and for the government, employment and discipline of the convicts. The work of the commission has been of the greatest value. Their recommendations have resulted in great improvements throughout all the penal institutions of the commonwealth. Their annual report to the Legislature is an admirable compilation of prison statistics,—by far the fullest and best made in New England, and not

excelled anywhere in this country. The presence of women on a board of this nature is exceptional, and its advisability has been seriously questioned. But no one familiar with the work of the board can doubt that they have added greatly to its influence. Since 1887 Massachusetts has had a separate official, called superintendent of prisons, to supervise all matters pertaining to the employment of prisoners in the state and county prisons and reformatories. Materials used in the prisons and for the maintenance of the industries are purchased under his supervision. Goods are manufactured and sold under regulations and by agents approved by him. Contracts for the employment of prisoners must also be approved by him. His work is of great importance and value to the state. Industries involving expenditures and receipts amounting to \$450,000, pass under his supervision. His office is independent of the Board of Prison Commissioners. The prison discipline and prison labor are, however, so closely related that the authority to regulate the two should be in the same hands. It seems to be unwise, therefore, to have independent authorities controlling the two, and in some way, undoubtedly, the work of the superintendent of prisons will soon be combined with that of the commissioners of prisons.

Massachusetts has another excellent state institution called the State Farm—a combination of prison, almshouse and asylum for criminal insane. It is under the direct supervision of a board of seven trustees appointed by the governor, two of whom are women, who make rules for its administration, and appoint its superintendent. Its general supervision is in the State Board of Lunacy and Charity. Five hundred and six prisoners were committed to the State Farm in 1893, mostly misdemeanants of the drunken, vagrant and tramp order. By a law passed last year it was enacted that hereafter no transfer should be made to this asylum from any other except of the criminal insane who had originally been sent from penal institutions. Massachusetts is excep-

tional, in having an asylum expressly for the chronic criminal insane.

There are twenty-one county prisons in Massachusetts in addition to the Boston House of Industry, a special city institution, which will be described later on. The jail population September 30th, 1893, was 2792. Commitments for the year aggregated the large total of 11,921. Sentences range from ten days to five years and more, though thirty-three per cent. of the commitments were for non-payment of fines and costs, sixty-three per cent. for periods ranging from six to twelve months, and only four per cent. for longer periods.

The condition and management of the jails of Massachusetts according to existing standards are, on the whole, good. The buildings, generally speaking, are large enough to keep prisoners in separate cells, and in view of the floating nature of their population and the difficulty of organizing work for a congregation of short and long-term prisoners, the industries of the jails are fairly well ordered. There are exceptions, however, to this degree of excellence. The buildings of the House of Correction at South Boston are old and ill-arranged. The cells are small and badly ventilated, and insufficient in number, many men and all the women sleeping in dormitories. Adequate provision for keeping the prisoners at work does not exist. Most of the four hundred and seventy men confined there last April sat in complete inactivity from morning till night, only a few of them even caring to read. The discipline is good, but there is no attempt to grade the long-term prisoners, and little effort is made to bring any helpful influences to bear upon them. In a word, this prison is no credit to Boston, but the responsibility for this does not lie with the superintendent, who is an efficient prison officer. It is fair to add that searching investigations of this and city institutions by special visiting committees, and by the city government, one of which is now in progress, have already resulted in full publication of the

discreditable condition of these institutions, and, it is reasonable to hope, will result further in needed changes.

The buildings of the jails at Northampton, Salem, Lawrence, Nantucket, and New Bedford are unsatisfactory and need change or enlargement. The arrangements for separating the women from the men at Salem and Lawrence are wholly inadequate and unfit. The cells for confining women in New Bedford are unsuitable. The jail at Taunton, to which 312 prisoners were committed in 1893, and whose average daily population was forty-one, has never had a workshop or any other provision for work. The prisoners are kept in idleness—a state of things most discreditable to Bristol County.

The Boston House of Industry, measured by its prison population, is the largest of the correctional institutions of the state. Its population September 30, 1893, was 1282, of whom 295 were women. The total commitments during the year were 5305, of whom 865 were women. The ages of prisoners range from twelve to more than seventy years, twenty-four being fifteen years and under; 343 have been previously committed to this same institution from sixteen to thirty times, ninety-four from thirty to fifty times, forty-three more than fifty times. This prison is under the supervision and direction of a board of the three Commissioners of Public Institutions, appointed by the mayor and aldermen. Of this prison a special committee appointed by the mayor in 1892 to investigate and report concerning this and other city institutions said :

"The prison contains only 410 cells. Of necessity, therefore, the majority of the prisoners sleep in dormitories, or in the corridors around the cells. All the prisoners congregate daily in their respective recreation yards. Adjoining the men's yard is a basement room, which has acquired the accurately descriptive name of 'Loafers' Hall.' It has been suggested that because this Loafers' Hall is too small to comfortably accommodate all the men, it should be enlarged. Your committee, on the contrary, recommends that

it should be abolished, as it is in fact a school of corruption. Here for several hours every day the hardened inmates who pass their lives between the prison and the city slums, meet old companions in crime; here the latest arrivals from town bring the latest news of the criminal court; and here young men serving their first term at the Island are introduced to notorious roughs of the city. Imprisonment while it lasts should isolate the criminal from his old pursuits. Life at Deer Island compels no such renunciation, but offers, on the contrary, unexampled opportunity for demoralizing association.

“A serious fault in the discipline of this institution is the lack of workshops and other facilities for work for the prisoners. One hundred and twenty-five men and sixty women are steadily employed in the manufacture of clothing on steam-run sewing-machines, 100 men work at stone cutting, and about sixty others are employed as carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, etc. This leaves at times upward of 200 women and 500 men for whom other than a mechanical trade must be provided. All of these 200 women and about 100 of the men are very adequately employed in making beds, cleaning, washing, sewing, etc., for the institution, and in work about the barn. The remaining 400 men are detailed for farm or such other outdoor work as the season allows; and when the weather makes outdoor work impossible, they sit idle sometimes for days in Loafers’ Hall.

“Prisoners should be removed from bad associations, and here they are plunged into the worst possible company; they should be kept hard at work, and here they are allowed to loaf for days and weeks. In view of these facts, it is not strange to learn that among the criminal class Deer Island is the most popular of the penal institutions, and that many prisoners scarcely regard a sentence there as punishment.”

One of the results of this admirable report from which the above quotations are taken was an appropriation of \$60,000 for new cells in 1892. The prison now has 776 cells,

but it is still often over-crowded, as the above figures of population will show, and the women continue to sleep together in dormitories.

I quote from a later report made by the Board of Visitors describing the state of this institution in April, 1894. I do this not only because it summarizes so well exactly what we wish to know of the prison, but because its defects described here are so many of them common to many New England jails, and the suggestions made concerning them are of such general value and application.

"When work is over, supper is served, and prisoners are then sent to their cells or dormitories and left in idleness through the evening. These hours could be profitably used for school. For the younger prisoners this might be a means of active good, and for the rest, to require them to practice reading and writing and figuring when their natural impulses would be to sit in idleness and chew tobacco, would be a wholesome discipline. A further valuable discipline would be a daily physical drill. For the men employed at sedentary occupations this would be especially beneficial, and for all it would be helpful in teaching obedience, energy, and self-control. It may be safely assumed that such exercises, both mental and physical, far from being considered luxuries, would be counted a severe discipline. * * *

"The apparent indifference of the Commissioners to this ['Loater's Hall' and its demoralizing tendencies], which has so long made the name of Deer Island notorious, is a symptom of the fundamental difficulty at this institution. No one connected with it seems to expect anything in the way of reform or to be interested to devise methods calculated to produce better results. If order is maintained among the prisoners, everything is considered satisfactory, even while it is frankly assumed that prisoners are discharged only to return to the haunts of vice and crime, and to be soon recommitted for some new offence. 'When did you leave?' is the first official question addressed to a prisoner on his ar-

rival at the island ; and 'last week' or 'last month' is a common answer.

"There must be something radically wrong in a system producing such deplorable results. This wrong, let it be conceded, does not lie wholly with the managers of this institution ; it is shared by the Legislature enacting laws, and by the police and by the courts administering them. The House of Industry, for instance, is in small part responsible for the prisoner sent to the island for thirty days for the sixty-ninth time because he could not pay a fine,—a sentence which fails to protect society, and which has no tendency to reform the offender. * * *

"The institutions upon Deer Island cost the city of Boston \$103,904.25 last year. To what end is this money spent if the inmates are restored to society after a few months' isolation, more certain to prey upon the community than before? Such a question is very pertinent to a department disbursing annually over half a million of the tax-payers' money. The citizens of Boston have a right to demand that this money shall be used with intelligent effort to decrease the number needing public maintenance."

Massachusetts has been the first of the New England states to apply the Bertillon system of securing identification of convicts by a special method of measurements. It is applied to all convicts in the State Prison and to all felons in the Massachusetts Reformatory. If all the states should adopt this system it would go far toward securing the identification and permanent incarceration of the worst class of criminals.

In 1887 the Massachusetts Legislature passed what is called its "Habitual Criminal Act," under which a prisoner convicted for the third time of a felony shall be sentenced for twenty-five years. Under this law twenty-one convicts are now serving twenty-five year sentences in our State Prison. This excellent law practically amounts to an indeterminate sentence for the more desperate class of criminals, since the act gives to the governor and council, when it shall appear to them that the prisoner has reformed, the power

to permit him to be at liberty during the remainder of his sentence, upon such conditions as they deem best, the violation of which makes the permit void and causes his re-arrest and confinement for the remainder of the term. This protects the prisoner from undue punishment, and gives him an incentive to good conduct. The first exercise of this power occurred the past year, in favor of a prisoner who had served five years of his sentence, and had during that time faithfully obeyed all the rules of the prison. Connecticut has a similar law.

At the last session of the Legislature Massachusetts took the first step for providing for the distinction and separation from other prisoners of persons held in jail as witnesses. The prison commissioners are given power to make special rules from time to time, governing the treatment of persons so held, and of removing them from one jail to another as they may deem fit. This is a recognition, though a somewhat tardy one, of the barbarous practice of forcing persons who are unfortunate enough to have been witnesses of some serious crime, into association with convicted criminals.

RHODE ISLAND.

Rhode Island is exceptional and fortunate in having its larger penal institutions grouped together on a large tract of land, some 600 acres, about six miles from Providence. The State Prison and Providence County Jail are different wings of the same building, and are under the same superintendence. The Workhouse and House of Correction has a different superintendent, but is also a state institution, and all three, as well as the four county jails, are under the supervision of the State Board of Charities and Correction, a well organized and very efficient board.

The State Prison is a modern building constructed in 1876, and is one of the best of its size in the country. It contains 124 cells. Until 1893 these have been sufficient to accommodate the prison inmates. In 1893 there was a sudden and marked increase of forty per cent. in the commitments

to the state prison, probably caused, as the state board say in their last report, both by an actual increase in crime and the greater energy on the part of the police and the courts in punishing it.

The association of the jail and the prison, under the same management, made it possible to provide for the excess of state prison convicts over cells, some fifty in all at one time, by putting them into cells in the jail wing. The average daily number of convicts in the state prison in 1893 was 140. At one time there were 174. Women are not confined in the State Prison. After being committed thereto, and entered on the books of the prison, they are sent to the female department of the House of Correction to serve their sentence.

The industries of the State Prison and Providence County jail, conducted under the contract system, are the manufacture of boots and shoes, harnesses and wire goods. The large grounds surrounding the institution give exceptionally good facilities for employing the short term men in road making and gardening. Some of them also find employment in weaving cane for chair seats.

The commitments to the county jail in 1893 numbered 1880, and it had a daily average population of 243. At one time there were 307. The 126 cells in the jail wing, some of which were occupied by the state prison convicts, were utterly inadequate to provide for this large number. The state board, with characteristic energy, after vainly urging upon the Legislature in their reports of 1890, 1891 and 1892 the necessity of relieving this serious overcrowding by making an appropriation for the enlargement of the jail, undertook themselves to meet the emergency. Out of their general fund for the maintenance of the prison they provided temporary quarters by building a wooden barrack for the accommodations for 132 men, their sleeping accommodations being berths arranged in three tiers.

This was, of course, only a make-shift, but it apparently so emphasized the necessity for new accommodations that

the last Legislature responded by an appropriation of \$100,000 to build a new jail, which will contain 500 cells. This will give ample jail provision for the present, and will enable the state to use the jail wing of the existing buildings as an addition to the State Prison.

The discipline of both institutions is firm but kindly. A system of grading, based upon conduct under a marking system, is in use in the State Prison, to the very great advantage of the prisoners and of the administration. The warden, General Nelson Viall, has managed the prison for many years, and the credit for its condition is largely due to him.

The population of the state workhouse and house of correction is made up, in the main, of drunkards, vagrants, tramps, and other similar offenders. Six hundred and ninety-two were committed in 1893, and there were 293 remaining at the end of the year, 223 men and 70 women. The skilled men among them are employed in the several workshops on work for the various state institutions on the premises. The unskilled laborers are at work upon the grounds in building and repairing roads, etc. The women do the laundry work, make and repair clothing for the inmates. This building is also overcrowded, and there is great need of its enlargement, as well as of a hospital for its male inmates.

There are four county jails, which are apparently fairly well conducted. It is to be noticed of the county jail at Newport that, although 166 prisoners were sent there last year, there was no provision for giving them employment.

There seems to be a real classification among the penal institutions of Rhode Island. Nearly all long term offenders are sent to the State Prison, a few going to the House of Correction. The true distinction between a jail and a house of correction seems to be more nearly observed by the courts of Rhode Island, as nearly all the persons confined in the jails are persons awaiting trial, or those committed for non-payment of fines or on short terms for

minor offences. This fact, together with the close grouping of the important institutions, gives to Rhode Island exceptional opportunities for grading, classifying and employing her prisoners according to the best modern methods. With the new jail to relieve the crowded condition of its principal institutions, and the supervision of a strong, intelligent board of state charities, Rhode Island ought to take the lead in the best reformatory penal methods.

CONNECTICUT.

The State Prison is at Wethersfield. The buildings occupied by prisoners were completed in 1889, and the 400 new cells are said by the directors of the prison to be "models for the combination of complete security with admirable provision for light, heat and ventilation. The hospital and chapel accommodations are not surpassed by those of any prison in the United States." This prison is exceptional among New England prisons in having much more cell room than is now in use.

In addition to the State Prison there are ten county jails; two counties, Fairfield and New London, having two jails in each. The State Prison is under the supervision of a board of seven prison directors. The jails are inspected by the State Board of Charities, who report concerning them, and also visit and report concerning the State Prison. The average daily population of the State Prison has been about 300 during the past year, that of the jails about 1000. Annual commitments to the jails number about 8000.

The industry of the State Prison is mainly the manufacture of boots and shoes under the contract system. With such excellent facilities, and under admirable supervision, it is not surprising that a good account can be given of the State Prison. I quote quite freely from the last report of the directors, because it describes concisely the state of affairs at the prison, and also because of the general value of

its suggestions and conclusions. After commenting on the good order and discipline of the prison, the directors say :

“ Nor should the influence of the changed surroundings of the prisoners be overlooked. The difference between the new block, with its commodious, well ventilated, conveniently arranged and sun-lighted cells, and the discomforts, noisome smells, constant dampness and daily twilight of their former quarters has been sufficient, of itself, to effect a revolution in the health and temper of the inmates. Nor should we forget that wholesome and nutritious food has contributed in no small degree to the general well being of the convicts.

“ If one object to be aimed at in the confinement of the prisoner is his reformation, it is obvious that whatever tends to improve his mind and refine his thoughts, without relaxing discipline or fostering a feeling of unrest, must be an important factor in securing the desired result. On the other hand, labor performed under unnecessarily depressing conditions, failure to recognize the fact that the prisoner has a moral and intellectual nature to be still further debased or to be stimulated into healthful activity, a code of regulations apparently based on the belief that the officials are dealing with machines and not with men—these features of prison life, and such as these, greatly retard, if they do not absolutely prevent, the progress of reformation.

“ In the spirit of these sentiments, we have sought, by giving elementary education to the illiterate, by furnishing to all the facilities of a large and well selected library, by occasional lectures, concerts and wholesome entertainments of various kinds, by the instruction of the Sabbath-school and by the week-day ministrations and Sunday services of the chaplain, to impart sounder views of life and more elevated ideals of conduct to the men and women committed to our care.”

The condition of the jails in Connecticut is in sharp contrast to the fortunate condition of its State Prison. More than seventy per cent. of the prisoners of the state are confined in the jails, which are often in a shockingly over-

crowded condition. Employment cannot be provided for prisoners so herded together. In the New Haven jail in November, 1892, there were 227 men in 146 cells, and 45 women in 28 cells; and though in this jail there seem to be good work-rooms for the men, who are employed in chair making, only fifteen of the forty-five women have any regular work,—the others sitting together in idleness. Apart from the sanitary and humane side of this state of things, the close association of a first and young offender with old and hardened inmates is degrading to the last degree. The State Board of Charities in their last report make this startling statement: "At present the county jail is, for any woman put into it, a school of vice."

The Hartford county jail shows the same record of overcrowding. Other jails make a better showing in these respects, but overcrowding and inadequate facilities for putting prisoners at work are present in most. There seems to be little or no attempt to classify prisoners with regard to age or crime. It is not surprising, therefore, to have the directors say "it will be found that while the prison population has been stationary, and considering the gain in the census of the state has been actually diminishing, the population of the jails, noticeably in the principal counties, has increased so rapidly and materially as greatly to embarrass the county officials and create a demand for additional accommodations to the cell room."

I cannot refrain from quoting the strong and pertinent words of the State Board of Charities regarding the jails in Connecticut. They apply with equal force to many jails in other New England states. They say:

"The whole question of the government of the ten county jails and of the laws under which commitments are made to them, demands the attention of the most enlightened penologists of Connecticut. In what way are the 3,000 prisoners in the New Haven county jail in 1892 less in need of such consideration than the 300 in the Wethersfield prison?

"The dangerous overcrowding in some jails; the lack of occupation in others; the contamination of first offenders by association with those hardened in vice; the lack of any enforced hygienic rules for personal cleanliness; the short sentences; the perpetual recommitments; the detention in jails of fit subjects for the state prison; the whole condition of the prisoners 'bound over,' these and other questions, carefully considered and intelligently answered by a non-partisan county jail board for the state, would go far towards improving the jails and lessening the jail population. Connecticut makes very careful provision, through a board of prison directors, for the oversight of the few hundreds of confirmed criminals. Why should she not try the experiment of beginning at the other end? Probably a large majority of the 300 last year's prisoners at Wethersfield reached that institution as graduates from the county jails. The 'first offenses' of the *prison* were only the first steps in that particular form of vice.

"The intelligent consideration given to them as state prison convicts for 'first offenses,' might have saved them if bestowed when they were first offenders in the county jails. The 3,000 jail men of New Haven seem to cry across to the 300 at Wethersfield, Are they criminals? So are we. 'In prisons more frequent.'

Connecticut is certainly fortunate in having supervision of its penal institutions in the hands of intelligent and progressive men. The record of its accomplishments, in the condition and management of the state prison, indicates a strong public support of the recommendations of these officials, and justifies the hope that its minor penal institutions will be put in a better condition.

AILING DISCHARGED PRISONERS.

The discharged prisoner without friends is heavily handicapped in his efforts, however sincere, to lead a reputable life. His prison record, however short, makes employment difficult to get, and if he has been long in confinement, he

re-enters the world a stranger to its ways and its people; and coming from the ordinary prison he is likely to be handicapped by long disuse of the faculty of self-reliance and the power to work, which are so necessary to success in the outside world. No time is so critical as the moment the prisoner is discharged. He should be helped and guided then, or the chances are greatly in favor of his return to bad associations and to crime as the easiest way to get his bread and butter.

These facts are generally recognized in New England, and some provision is generally made to help convicts discharged from the state prisons.

Maine makes a fairly generous provision for the comparatively few prisoners who go out from the State Prison. Each prisoner receives on his discharge a suit of clothes and five dollars in money. Maine has no agent to administer this relief. I do not find that any provision is made to help the larger number of prisoners discharged from the jails of Maine.

New Hampshire does very little even for the convicts discharged from its State Prison,—the value of about four dollars each being all that was expended on them in 1893, as against twenty dollars expended in Maine. There is no agent in New Hampshire. It may be added that the small number of prisoners discharged from these two states hardly justifies the appointment of special agents to administer relief, unless their efforts could be extended to the help of those discharged from some of the larger jails.

Vermont makes ample money provision for her convicts discharged from the State Prison. Vermont is exceptional in having in its State Prison a gratuity plan to aid and encourage discharged convicts. The law provides that every convict that shall so conduct himself, for any month of his sentence, that no charge for misconduct shall be sustained against him for such month, shall have paid to him on his discharge the sum of one dollar for every such month. In a word, the state, instead of paying every prisoner a fixed sum on his



discharge, regardless of his conduct in prison, offers to all the opportunity to earn a larger sum, not to exceed \$100 in any case, by continuous good conduct in prison. That this possibility is a strong incentive to good conduct, the record of the last report abundantly proves. Of the sixty-nine who were discharged during the two years covered by the report, fifty-two have gained all the time and money which could be gained by good conduct, having never been punished during their confinement. Of the remaining seventeen, eight were punished but once. This gratuity principle is admirable, and should be introduced into all our larger prisons. It is in use in all the prisons of England, and in several of the largest of the United States, notably in those of New York. Unsuccessful attempts in 1893 and 1894 were made by the Massachusetts Prison Association to secure legislation introducing it into the Massachusetts State Prison. There may well be a question as to whether it is safe to put a large sum of money into the hands of a prisoner on his discharge. He may spend it foolishly, though, having earned it, he is much less likely to do so than if it were a mere gift. It seems better to permit the expenditure of a part of it under carefully prescribed rules while the prisoner is serving his sentence, either for himself or for his family, and if any large sum has been accumulated at the time of his discharge, to put some part of it at least into the hands of the agent for aiding discharged prisoners, to secure its wise disbursement. There seems to be no such agent in Vermont.

Massachusetts does a great deal for discharged prisoners. Under the direction of the Prison Commissioners an agent is appointed to administer the relief given to convicts discharged from State Prison and the Massachusetts Reformatory. The commissioners also appoint a woman to act as their agent in rendering assistance to female convicts discharged from all the prisons of the commonwealth. They are also authorized to assist with funds an admirable institution, the Temporary Asylum for Discharged Female

Prisoners at Dedham. The agents of the commissioners disbursed in 1893 \$6,869.16. The city of Boston also has two such agents to aid male and female prisoners discharged from the Boston House of Industry and the Suffolk County House of Correction. They both do excellent work in securing temporary food and shelter for prisoners while seeking work, providing transportation for them to their homes, giving them needed clothing, and helping them in many other ways. Very little money, however, is allowed for this work, which is seriously handicapped by this official parsimony.

Added to this public work done through specially appointed agents, various organizations expend much time and money in relief. The Massachusetts Prison Association has done good relief work under the direction of its excellent secretary, Mr. Warren F. Spalding. The Massachusetts Society for Aiding Discharged Convicts has also done much work. While humanity demands that convicts should not be sent out without decent clothes and money enough to get to friends or work, mere money help is of little consequence as compared with the friendly aid which a good agent can give. Work, which an agent can more easily find, is worth more than money; having a friend to turn to at a critical moment, for advice or encouragement, the watchful care and timely warning or advice of a good agent, are of the greatest saving and sustaining value.

Rhode Island makes the same provision for prisoners discharged from its State Prison as Maine, namely: A suit of clothes and \$5.00 in money. There seems to be no agent in Rhode Island for aiding discharged prisoners.

Connecticut makes excellent provision for the care of convicts discharged from its State Prison. The Connecticut Prison Association dispenses the generous appropriation from the state of \$2,300 yearly, which is supplemented by large private gifts, under a well conceived and thoroughly organized system. The secretary and agent, Mr. John C. Taylor, has a splendid record of many years devoted to in-

telligent work. He is fortunate in having the hearty co-operation of an excellent committee of members of the association.

It is greatly to the credit of Connecticut that he can say that "no person discharged from the Connecticut State Prison can truthfully say that necessity compelled him to return to crime."

CONCLUSION.

Such, in brief, are the essential facts concerning the prisons of New England. What general conclusions can we draw, and what suggestions can we make? We see that the larger state institutions are, as a rule, well administered, with a good discipline prevailing, and efforts made in all to provide work for prisoners, and to do something for their physical and mental improvement. In the Rhode Island and Connecticut State Prisons, and, more notably, in the two Massachusetts reformatories, advanced reformatory methods are applied with excellent results in reclaiming men from criminal courses. All this is good and hopeful; but much more reformatory work can and ought to be done in the State Prisons. After properly grading and classifying prisoners, habits of industry established by hard and regular work, and mental, moral, and physical training should supply or restore those qualities which bad inheritance, bad associations, and vicious lives have destroyed. The long sentences to these institutions give great opportunity for this reformatory training. It would be even better if these sentences were made indeterminate, and if release were always made conditional on the prisoner's fitness to go out. Those who give no promise of reform, who are by nature incorrigible, are unfit to be at liberty and should be permanently held. If we ignore the welfare of the convicts altogether and consider the matter solely from the standpoint of the security of the community from crime, nothing could be more stupid than the existing practice of turning convicts loose after serving a fixed term of imprisonment, without regard to their fit-

ness to go out. This is especially true when, as is often the case, the contaminating influences of prison life have strengthened the criminal tendencies of the discharged prisoner.

We have seen that much more is done in our larger state institutions to reform the prisoner while in prison, and to help him on going out, than is done in our jails and our minor prisons. This is wholly irrational. Convicts in our State Prisons are, as a rule, older in years and in crime, and so less responsive to reformatory influences. They represent the class of more serious and desperate offenders, and are therefore vastly less hopeful material to work upon. Let us do what we can for these men. The safety of the community, as well as common humanity, demands that if we are to let them go, we should reform them if we can; but why is our obligation less in dealing with minor offenders, the misdemeanants in our county and city prisons? And yet, though they are far more hopeful candidates for reformatory work, and vastly more numerous, we find that while they are clothed and fed with more or less decency, very little or no regular work is required of them, little or no training of any sort is given, little or no helpful influences of any kind are brought to bear, and almost nothing is done for them on their discharge. On the contrary, we find that our jails too often contaminate and demoralize younger offenders, who are permitted to associate, or are actually thrust into association with the vicious and the vile. In nearly all we find the same sickening record of shameful overcrowding, of great numbers held for nonpayment of fines, of the habitual misdemeanant committed over and over again for short terms. In fact many of our jails are made inviting to the habitual misdemeanant, the vagabond, the tramp and the drunkard, who go there with satisfaction rather than with dread, because they find there what they seek—good food and lodging, comfortable resorts according to their degraded standard, where they can recruit their strength, wasted by criminal dissipation, for further offending.

On the other hand, our jails are too often made schools

of crime to those who, the victims of untoward circumstance, of weak wills, or of momentary passion, unhappily find themselves in prison; to that large number of men detained as witnesses, who have committed no crime; to the accused awaiting trial, who are often thrown into association with the convicts and treated like them, except that they are sometimes not given even the privilege of doing prison work, but must spend their time in idleness; and to that larger number of unfortunates who, not being able to pay the fines imposed for minor offences, (because, forsooth, they are poorer than the more fortunate, but not less guilty offenders who pay and go free), are imprisoned with hardened offenders and go out with the brand of imprisonment to make crime easier and upright life more difficult. The crying abuse of our penal system is its treatment of the misdemeanant class. It is in itself one of the greatest causes of crime; and there is no good excuse for it. One common excuse given is the alleged difficulty of doing much for short term prisoners, the fact being overlooked that a great percentage of the misdemeanant class in our jails (sixty-five per cent. in the jails of Massachusetts in 1893), are in for periods ranging from six to twelve months—a time within which something can be done to help them; or, if we cannot give them much positive help within that time, we at least can and ought to prevent their more serious contamination by thrusting them into association with the more vicious. But again, why should we have any short term sentences in the sense of this objection? If minor offenders are to be sent to prison at all (and they certainly should not be if it is the judgment of the court in their case that a fine, not imprisonment, is their proper punishment), send them on indeterminate sentences, and release them, if at all, when they are fit to be released, and then only conditionally to test that fitness.

But, further, why imprison so many minor offenders? Imprisonment more often hardens than helps them. A large percentage of those who are now sent on short terms could be released on probation if proper machinery for doing

it were set up in the various states. Massachusetts has an excellent probation system. All its courts of criminal jurisdiction have one or more officers appointed by the judges themselves (one of those in the municipal court of Boston is a woman) whose duty it is to investigate and report concerning the minor offenders, to recommend punishment or probation, and to have the oversight of those placed on probation. Last year 5137 cases were placed on probation under these officers, and though neither all our judges nor the probation officers themselves as yet fully understand the intent and possibilities of this law, an enormous amount of good is already being done under it. Expense to the state is saved, and what is infinitely more important, men, women, and children are saved from criminal ways and associations.

Again, it is said with regard to the proposition to reform or help misdemeanants that it is too costly an experiment, that it would involve too many new institutions, too many officials, too many teachers for the industries, and the like. It is all a very good notion for the theorist and sentimental to play with, but it is altogether impracticable, so they say.

I believe the reverse of all this to be true. Fewer institutions would be required to do the work properly than are now used to do it poorly, and could be maintained with less expense in the aggregate. Of course, this could not be true if our present wholly irrational county system of conducting our minor penal institutions is to be continued; but there is no good reason why the county system should remain, except the difficulty of doing away with it. In the mind of any one who has given the matter thought, there can be no question that the penal institutions in the state should all be under the control of the state. This should be so for various reasons:

(1) Uniformity of administration would be possible. A more intelligent supervision would follow, based on a larger knowledge of penology, and less influenced by the single

consideration of money cost, which now, naturally enough, so largely influences county administration.

(2) Under proper civil service rules, better officers could be secured as superintendents of our prisons,—men chosen for their fitness for the work, and not, as now, because they have the most political influence. In saying this I do not mean to cast any reflection on our sheriffs, or on their management of prisons. Comparatively few of the existing defects are chargeable at their door. During the shorter or longer tenure of their elective office they are expected to manage things about as they find them, along the narrow limitations which superior county officers or the county treasury put upon them. They are not chosen because of any special knowledge of prison matters, but because they happen to be good Republicans or Democrats, as the case may be. It is a tribute to the natural adaptability of American officials, put in circumstances however novel, that under the guidance of these elective officials our prisons are managed as well as they are.

(3) And what is more important, if the state could build just as many jails as it needs, and no more ; if it could locate them just where they are most needed ; if it could classify institutions as well as prisoners by putting one set of prisoners in one and not in any other ; and then if it could provide industries and reformatory methods suitable to each, it seems to be a fairly self-evident proposition that fewer buildings and fewer officials would be needed, much better and more economical administration would be had, and reformatory results of vastly greater value would be secured. Every prison would then have the independent and liberal management now given only to the larger institutions, and the possibilities of arrangement and development, now financially impossible in duplicate in the various counties, could be realized. Just this thing was done in England in 1878. All the local prisons were taken from the control of local officers and put under the supervision and direction of the home secretary. Almost immediately the number of prisons

in England was reduced from 113 to 58. Classification of prisons followed, classification and grading of prisoners in prisons became universal, reformatory methods were applied with intelligence, and with results in the diminution of crime which have been equalled nowhere else.

As a purely business proposition, why should the counties of Maine keep 14 jails for an average population of from 350 to 450 prisoners, when two or three, or even one prison, conveniently located, could easily house this number of men, organize industries, and apply reformatory methods in a way impossible in these 14 separate prisons? Why does Massachusetts need 21 county prisons to hold a daily average of 2792 prisoners, when it has been shown that a single institution, the Massachusetts Reformatory, cares for more than one-third as many, and gives them every reformatory advantage, while the county prisons give little or nothing? It cost the counties in 1893 \$133 a head to do practically no reformatory work, and to turn their prisoners out into the world, as a rule, more dangerous to the community than they were before they entered. It costs the state only \$168 a head to prepare 75 per cent. of the prisoners in the Massachusetts Reformatory to lead upright lives on their release; and, under the skilful management of a woman, it cost the state only \$118 a head to prepare to place the greater part of the women imprisoned at the Reformatory Prison for Women in domestic service in good homes. From a purely financial standpoint, which system gives the taxpayer the better bargain?

If safety demands more frequent places of temporary confinement than the few larger prisons which this state system would supply, these could be supplemented by lock-ups where needed, at little cost; and as for the added cost of transportation involved in this scheme, it would be very little as compared with the saving from the reduced number of prisons; but even if the cost were as great or greater, the greater usefulness of the fewer institutions would more than compensate for this cost.

I clearly understand that an attempt to change from county to state control would meet with bitter opposition of county officials, and I have been made fully aware by repeated experiences of their great power to carry or prevent legislation; but I believe the change is not only desirable, but necessary to any adequate solution of the existing defects of our prison system, and so is sure to come sooner or later. Until it does come, whatever enlargements or improvements are made in existing prisons should be made along reformatory lines.

Connecticut should have a state reformatory. It has plenty of hopeful material in its prisons to work upon. Vermont should give to its House of Correction at Rutland the reformatory facilities so forcibly and earnestly asked for by the board of directors in their last report. Boston, in its proposed changes in city and county institutions, should either build a separate reformatory for Suffolk County or give facilities for modern prison methods in its enlarged buildings. There is crying need for one or the other, if not for both.

The hope for a diminution of crime, in so far as institutions can help to realize it, lies in improving the character and methods of those which confine our early offenders. First deal wisely with truants and reform school boys, giving them separate and generous conditions. Then, coming to your misdemeanant, don't drive him lower down by sending him to prison if he can be put on probation, and provide the machinery for giving the proper probationary conditions and oversight. Then if he must go to prison, send him to one which can punish him, indeed, by hard work, plain, nourishing food, and strict discipline of body and mind,—the form of punishment most of all dreaded by the undisciplined, lazy or vicious fellow. Keep him there until he has proved his fitness to go out. Each time that he comes back make conditions a little harder for him than the last, and his term of imprisonment a little longer; but all the time appeal to anything good that there may be in him and strengthen that. If too frequent return proves that he is in-

corrigible, shut him up indefinitely in a separate institution at hard work. And to do this build such prisons as are needed, no more, and put into them as far as possible all the methods and devices that strengthen and build men up in the outside world.

All this is rational and practicable. If men were handled in this way crime would decrease wonderfully. Men would be saved and lives and property rendered vastly more secure.

NOTE.

A practical illustration of the right sort of prohibition work was given in the discussion following this report by Mr. Geo. W. Swan, the city missionary of the Society of United Workers, of Norwich, Ct.

First offenders and persons convicted of drunkenness, and of similar offenses, if their cases seem hopeful, are put on probation under the care of Mr. Swan, on condition of good behavior, and on the further condition that their wages during the period of probation shall be assigned to them for the use of their families. During the three years ending January 1, 1894, over \$42,000 in wages had been so assigned with the result, as Mr. Swan says, "that homes have been transformed, and joy has replaced destitution and sorrow."

In addition to Sunday services in the jails, week-day visits are made to prisoners. Hopeful cases are helped by this friendly interest, and by good reading. The novice in crime is kept from contact with the hardened offender. Those showing a desire to reform are met on their release, followed up, and helped to employment. After eight years of this work, Mr. Swan knows of more than 400 men, once prisoners, who are now leading upright and honest lives.

III.

PUBLIC RELIEF AND ALMSHOUSES.

ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN, JAMES H. LEWIS, AGENT OF
THE OVERSEERS OF THE POOR, SPRINGFIELD.

Perhaps, before proceeding with the business of this session, I may be pardoned if I explain that only about a week ago the gentleman who had been selected to preside at this session, found it would be impossible for him to do so. I was drafted into the service. At that time it was understood that a gentleman, noted for his experience and ability, was to present a paper to this conference on the subject of Public Relief in the state of Connecticut, so that the duties devolving upon me were simply those of presiding officer. Imagine my surprise when, within the last few days, I received word from the gentleman from Connecticut that it would be impossible for him to prepare the paper, or even to be present at this session. I thus found myself in charge of the session on Public Relief without a paper for your consideration, and utterly dependent on my own extremely limited resources for the proper presentation of this whole subject. I have, therefore, determined to present to you, as best I can, in the brief time allowed for preparation, a statement of the system of public relief in operation in the state of Massachusetts, hoping that you will find in it something interesting, as well as instructive.

In Massachusetts, from the earliest history of the colony to the present day, there have been in operation laws which compel the various cities and towns to provide for their poor. These laws were originally enacted in conformity with the English poor-laws, which have been amended, from time to time, to meet new needs and changed conditions, until to-day Massachusetts stands, I believe, first of all the

states in the Union in the completeness of its system of public relief.

Every city and town in the commonwealth has its board of overseers of the poor, who are required to furnish relief to all poor persons found within their precincts standing in need thereof.

Legal settlements may be acquired in any city or town, so as to oblige such place to relieve and support the persons acquiring the same, in case they are poor and stand in need of relief, in the manner following, and not otherwise: namely :

First. A married woman shall follow and have the settlement of her husband, if he has any within the state; otherwise her own at the time of marriage, if she then had any, shall not be lost or suspended by the marriage.

Second. Legitimate children shall follow and have the settlement of their father, if he has any within the state, until they gain a settlement of their own; but if he has none, they shall in like manner follow and have the settlement of their mother, if she has any.

Third. Illegitimate children shall follow and have the settlement of their mother at the time of their birth, if she then has any within the state; but neither legitimate or illegitimate children shall gain a settlement by birth in the place where they are born, if neither of their parents then has a settlement therein.

Fourth. Any person of the age of twenty-one years, having an estate of inheritance or freehold in any place within the state, and living on the same three years successively, shall thereby gain a settlement in such place.

Fifth. Any person of the age of twenty-one years, who resides in any place within this state for five years together, and pays all state, county, city, or town taxes, duly assessed on his poll or estate, for any three years within that time, shall thereby gain a settlement in such place.

Sixth. Any woman of the age of twenty-one years, who resides in any place within this state for five years together, shall thereby gain a settlement in such place.

Seventh. The provisions of the preceding clause shall apply to married women who have not a settlement derived by marriage under the provisions of the first clause, and to

widows; and a settlement thereunder shall be deemed to have been gained by an unsettled woman upon the completion of the term of residence therein mentioned, although the whole or a part of such term has already elapsed.

Eighth. Any person being chosen, and actually serving one whole year in the office of clerk, treasurer, selectman, overseer of the poor, assessor, constable, or collector of taxes, in any place, shall thereby gain a settlement therein. For this purpose, a year shall be considered as including the time between the choice of such officers at one annual meeting and the choice at the next annual meeting, whether more or less than a calendar year.

Also every settled ordained minister of the gospel shall be deemed to have acquired a settlement in any place wherein he is or may be settled as a minister. Soldiers are also given a settlement by reason of their service in the late war of the rebellion on the quota of any city or town.

Notwithstanding these various modes by which legal settlements are acquired so as to obligate a city or town for support, and I submit that they are liberal in their scope, there are a multitude of people who have no legal settlement in any city or town in the state. All such persons are aided where they are found, until sent to the state almshouse, and the expense is reimbursed to the city or town by the commonwealth. Prior to 1877 there was no law under the operation of which a city or town could lawfully furnish relief or support to an unsettled person, except he was too ill to be removed to the state almshouse. In that year the legislature passed an act providing for the relief of an unsettled person, under certain conditions and limitations, at the expense of the commonwealth. The law made it possible for the overseers to grant aid to such, not exceeding four weeks at any one time, to an amount not greater than one dollar per week for each person. Notice to the State Board of Lunacy and Charity of all such applicants was required, and the board was empowered to authorize the continuance of aid or to direct the removal of the person to the state almshouse.

This law was, in my judgment, at the time of its passage ill-advised, and, after an experience of seventeen years in its administration, I see no reason to change that opinion. It is, I thoroughly believe, impolitic and unwise to increase or extend the class of persons to whom it is possible, under the sanction of law, to grant what is known as municipal out-door relief. The baneful influences growing out of even the best administration of such laws so far overshadow and eclipse all possible good as to be, to my mind, sufficient justification for saying that this law should never have been put upon the statute book.

In 1890 special provision was made for the relief of soldiers and their families, taking them out of the class of paupers to be relieved by the overseers of the poor, and providing for their relief by the mayor and aldermen of cities and the selectmen of towns.

It is provided that soldiers and their dependents should not be classed or known as paupers, and should not be obliged to go to an almshouse unless their poverty be due to their own criminal or wilful misconduct, or their physical or mental condition require it.

I want to comment on this law in passing, by saying to you that it has always seemed to me there was no real justification for its passage, and that the inevitable result of its operation will be the same as obtains under the law of 1877 —to lower the standard of self-dependence and thrift. I yield to no man in my admiration of the heroic sacrifices, the loyal devotion and the high ideals of duty displayed by the boys in blue, nor would I be second to any one in fulfilling any and all obligations due them from a grateful people, but I would take care not to offend or degrade their reasonable sense of justice and right by offering them municipal aid from the common treasury the *same* as for paupers and then telling them they shall not be *called* paupers,—a distinction without a difference. I submit that it is degrading.

I believe that all laws contemplating or providing for the

granting of *municipal* out-door relief to the poor should be abolished. I would make it unlawful to expend money raised by taxation, unless in cases of sickness or accident, in furnishing relief to any one—man, woman, child, soldier or sailor—except in an institution. To your query, What would become of those now in receipt of out-door aid? I answer: Most of them, when they found they could no longer receive assistance, except at the almshouse, would suddenly find that they could support themselves, a few possibly would and should go to the almshouse, while the small balance remaining would and should be aided by private benevolence. Personal benefactions help the giver as well as the receiver. The degrading effect on the needy one is replaced by a feeling of mutual love and respect and trust, at once elevating and inspiring. The man is morally improved instead of being debased.

Another matter I desire to bring to your attention and commend to your careful consideration. Why should this elaborate system of settlement be longer continued, involving, as it does, years of study and research to rightly determine the intricate problems constantly arising? The number of paupers to be supported or relieved in the whole commonwealth under the present system would not be increased—probably decreased—if each municipality was required to care for its own poor without hope of reimbursement from some other city or town or from the state. The total amount of money expended in relieving the poor would not be greater than now for actual relief given. It would be somewhat differently distributed, but with their expert officers the cities and large towns, which would necessarily have the largest proportionate volume of cases, would be best equipped to deal with them. A large annual saving would result, I think, in law expenses and in salaries and expenses attending the present state supervision. I don't suppose it will be possible to secure at present so radical a departure from ancient custom in a state with Massachusetts' traditions. Still I believe a change along the lines I have sug-

gested would make for the improvement of the condition of the poor, and result in a great saving of money.

There is one word more I wish to say, and then I will give way to the next speaker. In the administration of the public relief of a city in Massachusetts, I find there is a growing feeling that there is something in the hands of the overseers of the poor which belongs to the poor. Many of them come into the office and ask for help, not so much because they need it as because they think it is there and can be had for the asking. Now, in Springfield we are thorough believers in what is called "the new charity;" we believe that if any one needs help from the municipality, he should be required to give something to the municipality in return for it. We demand labor in return for relief,—making exceptions, of course, in cases of old age and inability to perform labor,—and we believe that we are thus doing the applicant the best possible service. We relieve his immediate necessities, perhaps before he has performed his labor in return; and it is rare that a man, after receiving relief to tide him over, refuses or neglects to fulfil his part of the bargain. I find a growing disposition and willingness on the part of the poor to give this return; and when occasionally a man rebels, it is not necessary, perhaps, to say that we rebel also, and he gets no relief. The result is not a debasement of the man, a dragging down; he feels that he must rely on himself. When, and only when, he cannot get work elsewhere, will he come to us.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF.

BY MATTHEW J. CUMMINGS, OVERSEER OF THE POOR, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the New England Conference:

Out-door relief as a permanent system tends to stimulate the evil it is relieving. Persons who receive weekly or semi-monthly allowances for an indefinite period become demoralized and learn too readily how easy it is to receive aid for the mere asking. They lose their self-respect and become pensioners on public or private funds. The evil, however, does not end here, as their children soon follow in the path of their parents when they in turn become heads of families. For this reason I am firmly of the opinion that pauperism is a vice as detrimental to the community as intemperance, and, like it, goes from generation to generation.

My experience for the past five years has firmly convinced me that in order to prevent the evil it is necessary to demand of the recipient something in return in the line of work. The method to be followed by public or private dispensers of out-door relief should be to teach principles of self-sustenance and self-dependence. The person who gives aid for the mere asking does an injury, not only to the person aided, but the community at large. The aim should be to build up the man, to make him feel self-supporting and independent.

To prove by statistics the benefit derived by exacting labor in return for relief rendered, I would call your attention to a work that has been in operation for years in connection with the Providence Poor Department. Through the efforts of Geo. W. Wightman, overseer of the poor, a gentleman who devoted the best years of his life to the study

of pauperism, and who was conversant with the poor laws, not only of his own state, but of many others, there was established in 1878 a city wood-yard. The object of starting the yard was to supply work to the able-bodied applicants who applied for assistance. Previous to the starting of the same the expenditures of the poor department had reached, in 1877, \$26,452.32, and in 1878, \$30,888.75, while in 1879, after one year's operation of the same, the total amount expended was but \$19,767.64, a decrease of \$11,121.11, while the department in 1892 was run for less than \$16,000, with an increase in population of some fifty thousand people. This is sufficient to prove, beyond a possible doubt, what was touched upon by your presiding officer, that it is necessary to demand of the recipient something in return for the relief given. It will prevent the worthy from falling into that indigent class which is so strong numerically in our country. It is a weapon of defense in warding off the unworthy from preying on the sympathies of our charitably inclined public.

We expect, in a short time, to start a laundry as a work-test for women, for I am free to confess there are many mothers receiving aid who, if work were offered, would find it convenient to do without relief. A day nursery will also be attached, where the many children will be cared for while their parents are at work. When this work is accomplished I am sure out-door relief in our city will be reduced to its minimum.

The chairman has touched upon the settlement laws of Massachusetts. In my opinion they are bad simply because they are intricate. The laws of Rhode Island are very simple. Settlements are gained by the person holding real estate for five years to the value of two hundred dollars and an annual income of twenty dollars over and above any encumbrance. Any minor who shall serve an apprenticeship of three years at any lawful trade, and start in the same business for himself in the town in which said apprenticeship was served, three years after the expiration of the same, be-

ing then twenty-one years of age, gains a settlement. The wife shall follow and have the settlement of her husband, if he has a settlement at the time of his marriage; if not, the wife shall retain her settlement and her husband shall follow and have the same. Legitimate children shall follow and have the settlement of their father. Illegitimate children shall follow and have the settlement of their mother. A settlement is lost only by gaining a new one. A settlement in Rhode Island is rather hard to get, but once gained is very easily followed, therefore our cities and towns seldom have disputes about settlements.

As regards the giving of out-door relief, I feel it is not yet time to call a halt in that direction. I am sure there are many industrious and hard-working mothers today with a number of small children—I know there are in the city of Providence—left without legitimate support on account of the death of kind and faithful husbands. To place such mothers and their little ones in an almshouse, where the children are taken from their motherly influence and care, would, I am sure, be not only injurious to the children, but a great wrong to the mothers. If we can keep up the character of the person receiving relief, if we can keep from the child the knowledge of the aid rendered the mother, I feel we are doing all that is possible to be done under the present methods of distributing out-door relief. Today, before I left my office, a woman called to see me, whose husband died last week, leaving her with nine children, the oldest only fourteen years old. I knew her husband well, and he was indeed a model husband and she an industrious woman. I think an opportunity should be given that woman to try and bring her children up outside the influence of an almshouse. The least that we can support our inmates for in the almshouse is from two and a half to three dollars per week; whereas a great many of our dependent families would get along for a few months or years with out-door relief at a dollar or two dollars per week. Therefore I am convinced that out-door relief, properly administered, will accomplish

good results, provided we impose a test to weed out the worthy from the unworthy.

Now a few words as regards the centering of responsibility, and I will close. The poor department of Providence, a city with a population of some 160,000 people, is administered by one man. We in Rhode Island feel that responsibility should be centered, that when any wrong is committed it may be traced to the individual who is responsible to the people or the town council. The overseer of the poor in Providence is elected annually by the people,—which is not, in my judgment, a good or wholesome thing, for the reason that he no sooner becomes educated in the duties of his office than he may be relieved of his work and a new man placed therein, at a season of the year when imposters are numerous, and it is therefore impossible for him to do good work.

DISCUSSION.

MR. LEWIS: In the city of Bridgeport they have had some remarkable experience in the administration of outdoor relief. We have with us tonight Mr. William H. Bunnell, superintendent of the poor, and I should like to hear from him.

MR. BUNNELL: I often ask the question, when people apply to me for relief, "Is it fair treatment to a hundred and fifty people at our almshouse, working as they are required to do toward earning their living? What better claim have *you* than they, for wishing a separate home at the expense of the town? But the economy part is not all the question; it is a question, if I may express it so, of the breeding of paupers. The chairman has truly said that ignorance and vice are the cause of pauperism; but I say to you, after an experience of thirty years, with just as much emphasis, that pauperism is the cause of ignorance and vice. It is a momentous question how to meet this. Mr. Cummings spoke of the widow with nine children; does it occur to you

that there are nine human souls, whose future well-being is at his disposal? Any one who goes into this work should go into it with his hands and his heart in the work.

For fifteen years it has been a serious question with us in Bridgeport whether we should keep up this system of outside relief. We began this year with a determination to do away with it as far as possible. There are reasons why we could not do away with it all at once. The result has been that it has not cost us one-third as much, as far as we have gone in that way. We have given out nothing but a little money. Our experience is that it is better to do this than to furnish provisions and other necessary things by orders.

I want to say a word in behalf of the Associated Charities. It does seem to me that if their good work began to be appreciated, this room would not be large enough to hold those who would attend. Nothing but praise can be said for their work in the city of Bridgeport.

MR. LEWIS: I am afraid that what I said about outdoor relief is being misunderstood. I do not believe in the absolute abolishment of out-door relief. I think it is an absolute necessity. But what I do object to is that it shall come from the common treasury. I do not believe in *municipal* out-door relief. I believe that we, as individuals, not as a body politic, are charged morally with the duty of relieving our distressed neighbors.

I remember a young lady who told me she had never worn ear-rings, because she did not like to have her ears pierced, but that if she could have them pierced a little at a time, until they were done, it would be all right. That, it struck me, was a good deal like our friends' abolishing outdoor relief a little at a time. I do not believe it will ever be abolished that way.

REV. CLARK CARTER, *of Lawrence*: I would like to know what difference it makes to the average recipient of charity whether the money is raised by taxation or by voluntary gift. Somebody will answer that question, I hope.

The people I have to do with do not care; people come to me, as an administrator of voluntary charity, and demand that I help them, just as they make demand of the clerk of the overseers of the poor. It is cheaper, I know, for the overseers of the poor to have private charity step in and do the work.

This is my conception of the subject of alms-giving in the state of Massachusetts. The church and the state were once one in Massachusetts, and something of the spirit of the church remained in the state when they separated. The people of Massachusetts, in the spirit of Christ, intended that the Lord's poor should be systematically looked after; and, before the days of organized private charities, they organized a public charity which was intended to meet the need of everyone who came to be in want. I say to people who come to me, who have got beyond the reach of private charity and who must call on the overseers of the poor, "That is the kindly way in which the state of Massachusetts has arranged for the relief of the poor." I protest against the sentiment which looks down upon paupers. To be sure, there are two kinds of paupers, those who are in need because of their criminality or foolishness or that of their ancestors; and another class who have come to be in need from no fault of their own. But the very fact that these receive public aid brands them as paupers, and the finger of scorn is pointed at them, even in these associations and conferences of charity. I do not think it is charitable nor kind; it is certainly not Christlike. "The poor you have always with you;" and I suppose that the Lord Jesus knew that some of the poor were poor because they did not care, and because they would not work. I think we ought to take care of those whom now we call paupers in the kindest spirit possible, whether the charity be public or whether it be private.

MRS. L. E. MASON, *Winchester, Mass.*: The Winchester Union of our village, which has about 5500 inhabitants, was formed twenty-three years ago. It consists of women

from all the churches in the village, including the Catholics. The work of the Union supplements that of the overseers of the poor, who were only made a separate board about five years ago, the selectmen looking after the poor until that time. The board of overseers is formed of three men and two women, chosen each year.

I cannot agree with the first speaker about the working of the outside relief. Especially in the last year, we have found American families who have come to a hard place, who never were helped before, who really wanted for food and clothing, but felt they could not ask for charity. We have no almshouse in our own town, and without help they would have suffered. There was one family where the father died suddenly, leaving a family of six young children. The Union helped them and the town helped them, and the woman did all she possibly could, and now they are self-supporting and are doing well. There was another family where the mother died, leaving seven children, the oldest eleven years old. The father was a temperate man and a hard worker, but with small pay. Our Union, with a little help from the town, have brought them along, one of our visitors helping them with advice; but except for the outside aid I do not know what would have become of them. We never give money, but clothing, especially stockings and shoes, and garments which are given us to distribute. We try to have people pay, as far as possible, for what new things they have. The people of the village have confidence in us, and begin to feel that it is better for us to use the money than it is for them to give indiscriminately.

One gentleman said, in his remarks, "It has not cost us half as much since we cut off the out-door relief." I would ask, but is that the best for the poor people?

MR. MARTIN L. ELDREDGE, *Cambridge, Mass.*: Cambridge is a city of about 78,000 inhabitants, and it costs us about \$52,000 a year to take care of the poor. The almshouse takes about one-third of that sum, the care of the

insane poor takes another third, and the balance is outside aid given to poor families, chiefly in fuel and food supplies.

It was found some years ago that the expenses of the poor department were increasing at an alarming rate. There were half a dozen overseers of the poor in the different sections of the city, each having authority to grant outside aid, which was dispensed most liberally. This system led naturally to some abuses, and the overseers began to cast about for better methods of relief.

The abundance and variety of outside aid given may have reminded the overseers of the story told of the young girl in a distant up-country town, who applied to the overseers of the poor for aid. The chairman, a kind-hearted old gentleman, said to her, "My dear, do you want an order on the store, or money?" "Money," she said. "Well, how much do you want?" She tipped her head on one side and said, "Well, how much do you generally allow for a bead belt?" Possibly the overseers were apprehensive of a demand for bead belts. At any rate they reorganized the department, and appointed a visiting agent to whom they paid a salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year, and they saved much money by so doing. And now if anybody wants help, they have to be examined; to tell when they came to Cambridge, where from, how many are in the family, and what is really needed. They also provided that all orders for relief should issue from one source—the office of the secretary of the board.

In looking into the matter of our dependent population I have been struck by the rapid increase among the insane poor. In Cambridge during the last decade the population has increased about 36 per cent. while the number of the insane poor, supported at the expense of the city, has increased at least 200 per cent. I allude to this matter for the purpose of suggesting to the delegates from Massachusetts the importance of urging that state to appoint a competent commission to investigate the sub-

ject of insanity; its causes, its rate of increase, and the possibility of its prevention in some degree. While we have a state board busy with the gypsy moth, and cattle commissioners to look after the health of our herds, it seems to me that this matter, so vitally affecting the interests of humanity and a wise economy, should receive attention.

On the question of outside aid my views resemble somewhat those of Ethan Spike. When the Maine Law was first introduced, he was asked how he felt about it. "Well," he said, "I believe in the law, but I'm *ayin* its enforcement." That answer expresses pretty nearly my feelings in regard to the abolishing of outside relief. In other words while the trend of the best thought of the day, and the best promise of wise and economic administration, is in the direction of doing away with outside municipal aid, the plan should only be adopted by such communities as have an active charity organization of sufficient ability to prevent actual suffering.

MR. HIRAM McGLAUFLIN, *Watertown, Mass.*: I hope to see the day when outside aid will forever cease; but at the present time I cannot see how it is possible to do without it. And it seems to me that we must give, in special cases, more than we do. It is a rule adopted very generally by all overseers of the poor not to give more than two dollars a week. In the case which has been mentioned here, of the widow with nine children, what can two dollars a week do for her? "She must go to work,"—yes, but what are the majority of women in these cases fitted to do? They must either go out washing or go into a factory. The two dollars a week that you give that woman will not pay her rent in most communities in Massachusetts.

I have a case now in hand of a widow with five children. Her husband had a comfortable position, and they were able to get along very well; but in an unfortunate accident he lost his life. The woman comes to me for help: I say, as we are all agreed, "She must go to work." What does that mean? She gets up at six o'clock and gives the children their breakfast. Then the two who are old enough to

go to school must go into the street, and the others are locked into the house, while she goes to the factory. She comes back at noon, gets the hurried dinner and feeds her little ones; and the same thing goes on in the afternoon, while she works until six. After that, she must do the cooking and the mending for her family; and that is her life. Without having any argument upon the question, I would like to ask, "Is this a fair way to treat that woman, because misfortune has come upon her?" I say, until the state provides a better maintenance for such families, we ought decidedly to give more outside aid to those cases.

Miss Z. D. SMITH, *Boston*: I should be sorry to have Mr. Carter's question left entirely unanswered. How did the word "pauper" come to be a term of reproach? You will find in the dictionary something like this: "Pauper, a person who receives relief from the public under the provisions made by law for the support of the poor,"—that is, from money raised by taxation. It became a term of reproach because the giving of public out-door relief tends to make people *willingly* dependent. That is what the reproach in the term "pauper" means; and when a person receives relief from private charity and becomes willingly dependent, he is a pauper in the moral sense, although not technically.

In Boston, the people who receive relief from the taxes are more willingly dependent, or a larger proportion of them become so, than when they receive it from private charity; and that is the reason why I think it is better,—and I presume it is the reason why Mr. Lewis thinks it is better,—that relief should come from private charity when relief is necessary outside of an almshouse. Take, for example, the case of the widow with children, of whom Mrs. Mason speaks. Why should not the Winchester Union do *all* that is needed for those children, instead of saying, "We will get a little from the town?" What happens when they go to the town? The woman is asked question after question to prove her settlement, and she gets an idea that, if she has

complied in the past with certain conditions as to residence, she has a right to that relief, just as she has to draw a book from the public library ; it is money which the government gives to her because she has lived so long in Winchester.

I do not distribute either voluntary or public charity, nor do our visitors. Their endeavor is to get people on their feet ; and it is twice as hard to get people to give up public charity as to give up private charity.

I agree with Mr. Lewis that it would be much better if public relief were abolished. The experience of the town of Brookline, as well as that of the cities of Philadelphia and Brooklyn, has shown that without it many will manage to care for themselves, and that private charity can and will bear the necessary burden that remains. As long as public out-door relief exists, persons who might give charity will throw their burdens upon the city, just as the poor people do.

MR. LEWIS : The hour at which this session should close has arrived ; but I hope you will bear with me while I state that I never was more sincere in my life than I am with regard to the matter of the abolition of municipal out-door relief. I not only believe that it ought to be done, but I believe that it can be done, and that in every city and town. I believe that it would be better for the poor and better for the people.

In the city of Springfield, with a population of about fifty-five thousand, we expend in out-door relief the munificent sum of four thousand dollars annually. Is it much of a stretch of imagination to think that we could raise four thousand dollars among our people annually, in voluntary contributions, which would supply every dollar that the overseers of the poor give in out-door relief now ? I do not believe it would cost four thousand dollars to do that in private charity. If a man comes to me and asks to borrow a five-dollar bill, and I loan it to him, it is almost an unheard-of thing if he comes and asks for another until he has paid the first. It is exactly the same with the relief which one

neighbor gives to another. Private relief to the unfortunate helps, instead of debasing; and for that reason it is infinitely ahead of municipal relief.

IV.

CHARITY ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL REGENERATION.

ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN, PROF. J. J. MCCOOK.

What do we find most warmly urged in programmes of social regeneration? I think the following:

1. Scatter wealth.
2. Abolish poverty.
3. Provide work for everybody.
4. Make everybody work.
5. Put everything possible into the hands of government.
6. Organize and combine for these ends.

Assume that any of these things, or all of them, are ever attainable. It will still be admitted that they are indefinitely remote.

1. "*Scatter wealth.*" Wealth can hardly be said to have had its last word. Whether in the hands of individuals or of corporations, it seems to me to have shown thus far no real consciousness of either its danger or its strength. Its enemies have used the force that comes from combination and organization—have even used more of its own commodity, money—than itself. And yet in their present state of isolation and even antagonism, when its possessors have been driven into a corner, we have seen what it can do, in polities, in legislation, in resistance to encroachment. Wealth will continue to take care of itself, and the more you fight it the more closely it will cling to its ownings and the more jealously guard them.

2. "*Abolish poverty.*" How? By dividing up? Coining more money? Issuing more paper? Giving everybody a chance to borrow and never compelling him to pay? A part of this programme was tried in Jerusalem eighteen hundred and fifty years ago. A part has been tried on both sides of the water more lately; and it simply failed to work. A part has never been tried anywhere and is hardly likely to be. If it were tried who could make it succeed? "*More Money and Less Misery*" is the title announced for a lecture hereabouts the other day. It is an enormous assumption that misery either comes or goes with poverty. But if it were true, what misery greater than the absolute inadequacy of the measures proposed for anything like wholesale or even extensive abolition of it?

3. "*Provide work for everybody.*" What kind? How? Must I, a teacher, or a clergyman, or a lawyer, or my neighbor, a skilled mechanic, be told that the day laborer may count on government jobs, but I must shift for myself? Or, if he be entitled to work on his scale of pay, shall we be refused work on ours? One's head swims at the mere mention of a few of the preliminary difficulties. And the aggregate of failure which has followed the few and insignificant emergency attempts to put the theory in execution is sufficiently imposing to make one's heart fail at the thoughts of more of it.

4. "*Make everybody work.*" Indeed! That seems to be the simplest of all, and ought really not to be so immensely difficult. But apart from the inevitable divergency of opinion as to what we are to agree to call work, and how much work in a day is to pass, and what the bounds and exceptions are to be for age, sex, health, strength and condition in life, who is going to do the compelling, and when and where, in this federal union, is the beginning going to be made? Two years ago, according to the closest half-estimating, half-guessing that I could do, we had about forty-five thousand vagabonds in these United States, eating up about nine millions of dollars annually, and spreading

itch and syphilis and demoralization and terror in no small degree through the length and breadth of the land. With the same basis to start from, the Massachusetts reports of vagrancy, there were probably double that number last year. And who really tries to stop it? Do the railroads? They are perhaps as much interested in stopping it as any single body. For there is probably not a "bum" in this part of Christendom who ever dreams of paying a fare, save by the sheerest accident. And their journeying is more profuse and aimless than that of the most harum-scarum of our *jeunesse dorée* let loose with unlimited letter of credit in long-suffering Europe. I watched one particular freight train this last summer, and on twelve trips counted eight tramps. And this was in the effete East, and as the season was declining and the tide setting the other way. And I have been told of one fellow who made the round trip from Buffalo to Chicago, I think it was, three times in one week. Just why, he didn't know himself. Why should he? He was a professional tourist and paid neither fare nor hotel bill! You say some of the states have taken the matter up and compel these people to work—behind bars. I know it. I have waded through and made briefs of the laws of all of them. But did you ever know of a case where these laws were enforced for any considerable number of consecutive years? We had forty tramps laboring in our Connecticut State Prison at one time. I believe there is not one now. The law was new then, and besides there was a small bonus paid for every arrest. The bonus has been withdrawn and the law is old, and now our vagabonds, however they may be said to earn their bread, do not do it by the sweat of their forehead. Or, even if we Connecticut people were sharply resolved to make them work, what is to hinder their taking a "gondola," or a "Pullman side-door," or a "blind baggage," or a passenger truck, or a pilot, or the inside berth of a cow-catcher for some state less careful about this plank in our platform of social regeneration? Without uniform legislation what are you going to accomplish? And

if you fail with your fifty thousand tramps how can you expect to get on with the whole contract?

5. "*For these and similar ends extend the sphere of governmental action and introduce wherever possible governmental initiative.*" I do not wish to enter upon a question so difficult as that of the limitations of effective and economical governmental interference in our social machinery. No doubt there has been great and successful development along these lines in other countries, and there are no serious failures thus far in such parts of the theory as have been applied in our own. But the success of a part by no means argues the success of the whole of the programme. And there are matters, as already suggested, where, though you put the present defects and troubles at their worst, you are introducing an agency for their remedy which, so far as we know and also so far as most of us can foresee, possesses neither the wisdom to plan nor the organ to handle the extremely vast and complicated and delicate mechanism required for dealing with these millions of interlocking lives and interests and purposes. It seems to have been overlooked that even the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness was arrested and paralyzed in this attempt. And what arrested and paralyzed it is what is here today to write Failure, in advance, upon every such human ambition—the ineradicable frailty of man himself.

And if you say "Nay, but it is worth trying for, this vast and beneficent programme, since if you venture nothing you have nothing; therefore organize, coöperate, strike, coerce;"—there is the sad reflection that every such effort, whether successful or not, wastes more than it saves—or seems to do so, at all events—and, worst of all, that it pulls apart man from man, interest from interest, class from class—if you must use that hateful word—and so in the very effort to regenerate society, wrecks it! For what is society but partnership between man and man, interest and interest, plan and plan, life and life, while this mortal state endures? Ruin that, and what is there left worth fighting for or even talking about?

But, to close this part of my theme as I began it, above and through the whole of the argument is the conceded truth that a programme like this is, for us and our day, practically impossible. If we are to do without every part of the good which these things contain until we can get the whole, we are robbing ourselves utterly.

Is there then no way out? Must we put up with things just as they are? Is there no instrument, capable of being wielded by us, through which these things can be dealt with to some comfortable degree of success? May we not secure the substance of what we want without wasting our strength in grasping at shadows? Can we not obtain what we really need in the social order without risking the dangers and losses of revolution? Let us see.

1. Take our first scheme — “scatter wealth.” Instead of making rich men and corporations clutch their money the tighter by questioning their title to it and putting them on their defence, how will it do to show them promising ways of spending it while they are living and after they are dead? How will it do to get them interested in organized attempts to develop particular city districts morally and mentally and physically, just as agents of “booms” and “syndicates,” and electric roads and new cities try to get them interested in their pets? They pour out money like water on those things. For every dollar they spend on them they probably on the average get back not more than twenty cents. And with time and experience they come to appreciate perfectly the chances they take. Yet they keep venturing. Why not try to turn their energies more this way? “They are unresponsive, unsympathetic, hard-hearted,” you say? Oh no! Everybody who has had to do with benevolent activities will join me, I think, in my denial. The rich men and even the great corporations of America, I will venture to say, are already far from backward in good will and good deed in these matters. Take them by and large, they only need to see here, as there, an interest which commands sympathy, appeals to judgment and prom-

ises reasonable return, in order to back it with their money. Such, at least, is my belief and my experience. And I am persuaded that but scanty justice is done them for the most part by their critics. But at least this must be conceded: that while menace, like the sign "beware of pickpockets," tends to make them clasp their hands upon their purses, the appeal of charity, offering, through organization and system, not only objects of pathetic and noble interest, but also reasonable methods and economy in machinery, will inevitably tend to make them relax their grasp upon their purses.

2. And for the next item in the programme: "Abolish poverty." If that be impossible in the literal sense, so far as we can see, can we not do something practicable in that direction? How will it do, for example, to get some reason and real charity into alms-giving, whether by individuals or by societies or by the Commonwealth? If you can get some self-respect into a pauper, and set him in the way of doing without communal aid, have you not done something toward abolishing poverty? Or if you have given friendly, tactful hints to a slatternly housewife about economical buying and wholesome cooking and the savings of neatness; or if you have taught a person destitute of a handicraft some new skill or art; or if you have got the children off the street or the railroad embankment into a school, or if you have lightened the dull, unyielding load on a working woman's back by getting her sick mother or child into a hospital, or her drunken husband into a reformatory; if you have done any such thing as these,—and their name is legion—have you done nothing toward abolishing poverty? You may not have abolished much of it. Nay! you will, in sober truth, have abolished only an infinitesimal corner and fringe of it. But is the half loaf of no value because the whole bread is unattainable? Is the dog to drop the bit of meat in his mouth on the chance of shadow-chasing in the water-mirror?

3. "Provide work for everybody!" Not quite—nor anything like it. But suppose we provide good, honest, loving work among their fellows to that great and increasing

army of women and men with means and leisure, and often with blank, desolate hearts and blighted lives and no tangible vocation! And suppose we and they act as apostles of the old social philosophy, "If any man will not work neither shall he eat;" and that other "If any man [who can] provide not for his own he is worse than a heathen man and a publican;" and that other, "Let every man labor with his hands, providing things that are honest!" And suppose we and they band ourselves together in charity organizations and offer friendly hints and occasional necessary lifts to those who have no work, or who don't know how to work to good advantage, or whose work is unremunerative! That will not be providing work for everybody: but it will be leaving fewer without work. And that will be a certain gain.

4. And, then, as to "Making everybody work." What if we should just set the example of diligent work before our own children and in our own set? You have seen the picture which represents the idle club-man remarking lazily to his twenty-one-year-old-exquisite son and heir, "Well, my son, isn't it about time you were thinking of what you're going to do in life?" "Yes father; and I've about made up my mind to—follow your profession!"

Or what if we should set our face as a flint, in our own community, against alms to beggars without work required, and in favor of systematic, persistent measures towards mitigating the tramp danger? Your charity organization may easily furnish a suitable agency for dealing with it. Even though its general policy lead into other lines of activity. Or you may even be able to get your town to stop keeping these people over night, whether with or without food, unless with cleanliness and labor required, and on suitable restriction as to frequency of return. Or you may be able to get your overseers of the poor to stop helping able-bodied paupers, male and female, and to insist upon a frugal and laborious life at the alms-house; and your county commissioners to make the jails, and your state com-

missioners the state workhouse and reformatories, as places of winter resort somewhat less attractive to the flesh and somewhat more profitable to the spirit of the average vagabond and idler than many of them are at present.

In a word, make some few people work who ought to but do not. That will not be the whole programme; but it will be an interesting beginning.

5. And instead of the partly untried, largely hazardous development of municipal and governmental initiative, stimulate individual initiative, which, even though it should fail of absolute success, will yet be failure limited and isolated, and bring with it no such chances of wide-spread demoralization as the other. The more government does, for example, in helping communities in times of special emergency, the more it is allowed to do. And it should never be forgotten that what government does in relief or help of any kind falls certainly and, relatively speaking, most heavily upon the poorer among us. The man with a small home may have to pay from one to three days' work in taxes for slovenly administered alms; and that is a heavier burden for him than the extra three-quarters mill tax is upon the list of his rich fellow citizen.

Let government be liberal in caring for the helpless! But let it, out of regard for that section of its subjects most worthy of consideration, the laborious, self-supporting poor man, be rigid, to severity, in lopping off everything else in the direction of public aid! Charity organizations have no right, I think, whether on grounds of policy or otherwise, to undertake crusades in this, or any similar direction. But they may, and often do, serve as rallying points for conference and dissemination of intelligence and of true ideas in relation to them, which, on other fields, the members may, as individuals, rightly remark.

6. Last of all: I have referred to the possible disruptive and disorganizing effect upon society itself of certain methods of setting forward the programme we have been discussing. Over against that I would set, not merely the unifying

influence of charity itself as a sentiment, but the specific effects of charity organization. The organization itself brings all sorts of polities and nationalities and occupations and religions together. The directorship and management of my own home branch includes a first selectman, a chief of police, the mayor of the city, the secretary of the board of trade, a police commissioner, a cigar maker, a judge of the United States Court, two professors, a life insurance president, a fire insurance secretary, two clergymen, two bank presidents, two lawyers, a real estate broker, a state commissioner of charity, two ex-teachers and several ladies busy with domestic life. In religion it represents Judaism, Roman Catholicism (a clergyman and vicar-general of the diocese), Congregationalism, Universalism, and Methodism, I think; Seventh-day Baptists, Episcopalian, and I dare say others. Is it not something to have found a common bond, outside the more material interests of life, for these varied callings and professions and beliefs, so often unsympathetic and antagonistic?

And these and their agents and their visitors, all adopting on one line of their activities the superb motto, "Not alms but a friend,"—master key, which unlocks so many difficulties! All submitting themselves along every line of their activities to the law and the power of charity—Love!

It makes no noise. It blows no trumpets. It attempts neither menace nor coercion. It neither solicits nor invites nor accepts nor tenders political influence or worldly power. But surely organized charity has preternatural powers for fusing and moulding and tearing down and building up. Surely here, if anywhere, society will find that better thing than instantaneous revolution—gradual regeneration.

NOTE: Page 443, 1st line of Note, read probation instead of prohibition.

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